

The Deity of Jesus and a Seriously Flawed Tract

by Jeremy James



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While some aspects of theology and church practice can be addressed only through a scrupulous, even painstaking, examination of Scripture, there are others which are easy to establish. Chief among these is the deity of Jesus. It is the rock on which the church is built, the very foundation of Christianity. No one can preach the gospel or witness to another person without a vivid awareness and heartfelt appreciation of this wonderful reality.

It is the truth which the Enemy attacks more vehemently and more frequently than any other in Scripture. John even uses it to define the spirit of Antichrist:

**"For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist."
(2 John 1:7)**

There have been many throughout history who denied the Trinity. In doing so they were focusing primarily on the Second Person and rejecting the well-established Biblical doctrine that Jesus of Nazareth was both fully man and fully God. The denial of this truth is the chief defining characteristic of a cult.

It is essential therefore that all believers proclaim, with assurance and conviction, the incarnate deity of Jesus of Nazareth. There can be no wavering, no suggestion of any kind that this fundamental truth rests on anything less than the full and perfect testimony of God's Word.

By basing our case on anything less we detract from the greatness and glory of Christ, implying – perhaps unwittingly – that the proof of his deity rests in part on a willingness to read more into Scripture than it actually says. But Scripture leaves no doubt about this, none whatsoever!

Sceptics and naysayers have long sought to cast doubt over this issue, to imply – often by a variety of subtle means – that the Bible never fully established, clearly and unequivocally, the fact of his deity. But it did, and we need to declare this fact unashamedly to all who will listen!

Alas, we have seen recently an instance where a well-known ministry forgot to do this. Instead of boldly proclaiming the deity of Christ, with ample scriptural proof, it chose instead to rely primarily on allegory and metaphor. As a result its 'defense' was disturbingly shallow. We refer to the new tract from Lighthouse Trails – ***Did Jesus Identify Himself as God?***

Proof of the Deity of Christ through his own words and ministry

If we take this question and answer it ourselves, we will arrive at a scriptural demonstration of the deity of Christ – based exclusively on his life and ministry – that differs significantly from the one produced by Lighthouse Trails.

Let's start with an obvious fact, that Jesus was the Messiah and that through his life and teachings he fulfilled the countless Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah. Since Jesus of Nazareth was indisputably the Anointed One foretold in Scripture, as he stated himself on many occasions, we need to look carefully at his attributes, again as foretold in Scripture, and see whether they include his divinity.

A comprehensive review of the Old Testament under this heading would extend far beyond the remit of this paper, but a simple survey will suffice. The Old Testament states very plainly, in at least fourteen places, that the Messiah was divine:

1. PROVERBS 30

"Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?" (Proverbs 30:4)

This important verse confirms that God, the creator of heaven and earth, has a Son. The Son is therefore divine. Since many other verses in Scripture identify the Son with the Messiah, then the Messiah was (and is) God.



2. ZECHARIAH 12

"In that day shall the LORD [YHWH] defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the LORD before them. And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn." (Zechariah 12:8-10)

The LORD is referring to Himself ("and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced") when He speaks of the Messiah. Psalm 22:16 – "they pierced my hands and my feet." – identifies the Messiah with the one who is pierced. This shows that Christ Jesus and YHWH are one.

3. ZECHARIAH 2

"Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the LORD. And many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto thee. And the LORD shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again. Be silent, O all flesh, before the LORD: for he is raised up out of his holy habitation." (Zechariah 2:10-13)

The prophet states emphatically that the LORD (YHWH) will come and dwell in Zion in the midst of His people. What could be plainer?

4. JEREMIAH 23

"Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, The LORD Our Righteousness." (Jeremiah 23:5-6)

The "righteous Branch", of course, is the Messiah. In that day, when he rules on earth, he will be called "The LORD [YHWH] Our Righteousness". This again shows that Christ Jesus and YHWH are one.

5. MICAH 5

"But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."

(Micah 5:2)

This is the famous prophecy that foretold the location – Bethlehem of Judah – where the Messiah would be born. The prophet states that the Messiah had been actively in existence **"from everlasting"**. This meant he had no beginning and therefore was not created. Since YHWH alone possesses this attribute, then the Messiah and YHWH are one.

6. ISAIAH 7 and 8

"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." (Isaiah 7:14)

This well-known prophecy states that the Messiah would be born of a virgin. The name Immanuel means "God with us" (i.e. God [Hebrew: *El*] living among us as a man). This interpretation was confirmed in Matthew 1:23 (See also Jeremiah 31:22). Since the name in this context is intended to express an attribute, and since the attribute in question is deity, then the verse is confirming that the Messiah was God.

Proof of the deity of Jesus, as conveyed by his God-given proper name, Emmanuel, may also be found in Isaiah 8:8-10.

(8) And he shall pass through Judah; he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach even to the neck; and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel. (9) Associate yourselves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces; and give ear, all ye of far countries: gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces; gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces. (10) Take counsel together, and it shall come to nought; speak the word, and it shall not stand: for God is with us. (Isaiah 8:8-10) [KJV]

Young's Literal Translation of the Bible gives an accurate alternative translation of Isaiah 8:10 – **"Take counsel, and it is broken, Speak a word, and it doth not stand, Because of Emmanu-El!"** The Messiah, at his second coming, will break "in pieces" the nations that gather together at Armageddon to destroy Israel. When this happens the faithful remnant among the Jews will joyfully exult ***"Emmanu-El – God is with us!"***

7. ISAIAH 9

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." (Isaiah 9:6)

The incarnate Messiah will be both **"the mighty God"** and the **"everlasting Father"** (or eternal Father). If this was the only verse in the Bible that asserted the divinity of Jesus, it would establish the matter beyond question.

8. ISAIAH 40

**"The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God."
(Isaiah 40:3)**

The New Testament confirms that this verse is referring to John the Baptist (Matthew 3:3), who testified before the world that Jesus was the Messiah, the Lamb of God. Since Isaiah 40:3 is speaking of the Messiah, and refers to him as both LORD (YHWH) and God (Elohim), then plainly the Messiah was divine.

9. MALACHI 3

"Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to this temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts." (Malachi 3:1)

This verse also refers to John the Baptist, **"my messenger"**, who will prepare the way **"before me...saith the LORD [YHWH] of hosts."** The Messiah is again identified with YHWH.

10. PSALM 2

"I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee...Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him." (Psalm 2:7 & 12)

This remarkable psalm declares emphatically that the Messiah is the Son of God and that anyone who dares to claim otherwise will face His wrath.

11. PSALM 45

"Thy throne, O God [Elohim], is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre." (Psalm 45:6)

Since this Psalm is about the Messiah, and the throne in question is on earth, the Messiah must be one of the three Persons in the Trinity (Elohim) and therefore divine. The "sceptre" is a reference to the famous Messianic prophecy in Numbers 24:17 – **"...there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel..."**

12. PSALM 80

"Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the son of man whom thou madest strong for thyself." (Psalm 80:17)

This verse identifies "the son of man" with the "man" at the "right hand" of God. There are many references throughout Scripture to "the right hand" of God which relate solely to God Himself, e.g. **"Thy right hand, O LORD, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O LORD, hath dashed in pieces the enemy."** - Exodus 15:6. By connecting the Messiah, the Son of Man, with the right hand of God, this verse shows that the Messiah participates in the divine nature. The opening verses of Psalm 110 confirm this.

13. PSALM 110

"The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies." (Psalm 110:1-2)

When read in conjunction with Psalm 80:17 (**"Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the son of man whom thou madest strong for thyself."**) we can see that this verse speaks of the Messiah, the Son of Man, sitting (or enthroned) at the right hand of God and therefore participating in His sovereignty, like the ruling co-regents of Judah. Since the throne of God is reserved for God Himself (**"I will not give my glory unto another"** – Isaiah 48:11), the Son of Man must also be the Son of God.

14. ZECHARIAH 13

"Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones." (Zechariah 13:7)

The significance of this remarkable verse is often overlooked by readers of the English translations. Both Unger and Baron in their respective commentaries on Zechariah show that the Hebrew words translated "my fellow" in the KJV should be understood to mean *similar in essence*.

Strong [H5997] defines the word in question, *'āmīyth*, as follows: "from a primitive root meaning to associate; companionship; hence (concretely) a comrade or kindred man: – another, fellow, neighbour."

Baron says, "The idea of nearest one (or fellow) involves not only similarity in vocation, but community of physical or spiritual descent, according to which he whom God calls His neighbour cannot be a mere man, but can only be one who participates in the Divine nature, or is essentially Divine."

Unger is just as direct: "This is an unmistakable Old Testament reference to the deity of the Coming One, the Lord's Shepherd, and the expressions employed are extremely significant...Even more arrestingly He is termed **the man of my union**, *gever 'amithi*, i.e., a human being closely conjoined or united to Me."

It is extraordinary that the tract released by Lighthouse Trails should refer so prominently to Christ as "the good shepherd" and yet fail to mention that Zechariah 13:7 connects that title directly to the deity of Christ.

Jesus referred to himself again and again throughout his ministry as "the son of man". This seemingly mild epithet (which could apply to any living man) was actually a reference to Psalm 80:17 and Daniel 7:13. Every time Jesus referred to himself by this title, he was pointing to his incarnate deity. When God became man, He added humanity to his intrinsic nature. Since this was an attribute that He did not previously possess, it was appropriate that Jesus should make frequent reference to it.

By asserting even once that he was the Messiah, Jesus was claiming to be God incarnate. This is proven conclusively through these 14 passages of Scripture. Given that this the case, why were none of these passages quoted in the Lighthouse Trails tract?

Further conclusive proof from the words and ministry of Jesus

If we assume that the editors at Lighthouse Trails decided to confine themselves almost entirely to the New Testament when addressing the question ***Did Jesus Identify Himself as God?*** – a truly bizarre decision to say the least – we still find many astonishing omissions.

Chief among these is the absence of any reference to the three occasions when the LORD God of all creation spoke audibly from heaven, declaring that Jesus was His Son. This occurred at his baptism in the Jordan, at his transfiguration, and in the week or so prior to his crucifixion. These are immensely important, not just because the LORD in heaven spoke directly to mankind about His Son, but because Jesus himself did not deny what the voice had declared:

**"And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son,
in whom I am well pleased." (Matthew 3:17)**

**"While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and
behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son,
in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." (Matthew 17:5)**

**"Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying,
I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." (John 12:28)**

Why were these wonderful passages not included in the tract? To any Bible-believing Christian they are a glorious testimony to the deity of Jesus and stunning confirmation that he acknowledged this truth before his disciples.

The 'most direct reference' to the deity of Jesus

In its tract Lighthouse Trails states: "John 8:56-59 contains perhaps the most direct reference to Jesus' deity." Here is the passage in question:

**"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.
Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou
seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before
Abraham was, I am. Then took they up stones to cast at him."**

(John 8:56-59)

The force of this statement – **"Before Abraham was, I am"** – rests primarily on the meaning of the name 'YHWH'. The Pharisees recognized this immediately and knew it was a claim to deity. This is why they wanted to cast stones at him. However to claim that this passage is "perhaps the most direct reference" to the Lord's deity is somewhat disingenuous. The four Gospel accounts contain many statements by Jesus which assert his divinity and which are no less direct.

The tract also quotes a few words from John 14:9 – "he that hath seen me hath seen the Father" – but fails to cite the entire passage (verses 8-10 in full). It is hard to understand why it was glossed over since this passage, in its totality, shows that Jesus claimed to be divine:

**"Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus
saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not
known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how
sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the
Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of
myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." (John 14:8-
10)**

Here are a further eighteen passages from the four Gospel accounts (none of which are quoted by Lighthouse Trails), **each** of which proves that Jesus identified himself as God:

► Jesus claimed to be the Messiah

1. "The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he." (John 4:26)
2. "Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me." (John 10:24-25)
3. "And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." (John 20:28-29)
4. "But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 16:15-17)
5. "Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." (Luke 24:25-27)

► Jesus lived with the Father before creation

6. "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." (John 17:5)
7. "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." (John 17:24)

► Jesus claimed to be the Son of God

8. "But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God." (John 5:17-18)
9. "Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him." (John 9:35-38)

10. "Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God? If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him." (John 10:36-38)
11. "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it." (John 14:13-14)

► Jesus identified the Son of Man with the Son of God

12. "For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man." (John 5:26-27)
13. "But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." (Mark 14:61-62)

► Jesus acknowledged that he was the Son of God

14. "Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." (John 6:68-69)
15. "She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world." (John 11:27)
16. "Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God." (Matthew 14:33)

► Only as God could Jesus have sent the Holy Spirit

17. "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:" (John 15:26)
18. "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." (John 16:7)



These eighteen passages are very clear and very easy to understand. Every one of them shows that Jesus claimed to be the Son of God, the Messiah – the living God incarnate in human form. It is mindboggling to think that the editors at Lighthouse Trails could fail to mention any of them in a tract purporting to deal with the question, ***Did Jesus Identify Himself as God?*** And then they had the chutzpah to suggest that John 8:56-59 was "perhaps" the most direct reference to the deity of Jesus.

What is going on here? Who on earth proves the deity of Jesus, through his words and ministry, in this absurdly restricted way?

Forgiveness of sin

Another important proof of the deity of Jesus was his authority to forgive sin. Even the Pharisees knew that God alone could forgive sin:

"When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee. But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only? ... But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house." (Mark 2:5-7, 10-11)

This passage alone is conclusive proof that Jesus identified himself as God. Not only did his words and his actions convey this, but through them he challenged his audience to accept his claim.

Strangely, this passage was not cited in the Lighthouse Trails tract.

The New Covenant

We have below yet another passage from the Old Testament which proves the deity of Jesus:

"Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people." (Jeremiah 31:31-33)

Compare the prophecy in Jeremiah with the account of the Last Supper given in Luke:

"Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you." (Luke 20:22)

The corresponding verses in the other Gospel accounts are:

"For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." (Matthew 26:28)

"And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many." (Mark 14:24)

When he spoke these words Jesus was announcing that his shed blood on Calvary would create the new covenant (or testament) which the LORD had promised in Jeremiah 31:31-33. This was obviously a direct claim to divinity by Jesus, and yet none of these four passages of Scripture appear in the Lighthouse Trails tract.

Worship of Jesus

There are two verses in the Book of Revelation – along with the Second Commandment! – which prove that Jesus, in the course of his ministry, identified himself with God:

"And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." (Revelation 19:10)

"And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things." (Revelation 22:8)

The Bible makes it perfectly clear that no created being is to be worshipped. All worship is for God alone. Given that Jesus accepted the worship of his disciples on numerous occasions, he not only identified himself with God but did so in a very public way.

The tract makes no mention of this.

The 'I Am' statements of Jesus

As we have already noted, the Lighthouse Trails tract relies almost exclusively on the "I am" statements as proof that Jesus identified himself with God. These comprise

"I am the bread of life" (John 6:35)

"I am the light of the world" (John 8:12)

"I am the door" (John 10:9)

"I am the good shepherd" (John 10:11)

"I am the resurrection, and the life" (John 11:25)

"I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6)

"I am the true vine" (John 15:1)

The seven "I am" statements by Jesus serve primarily as a way of explaining what his incarnate deity entails. To that extent, they *assume* rather than prove his deity.

The editors at Lighthouse Trails clearly believe that the seven "I am" statements answer the headline question, 'Did Jesus Identify Himself as God?' but they are mistaken. In reality they answer a very different question, namely, 'What does it mean for us that Jesus is God?'

If they are taken as proof that Jesus identified himself as God, then, relative to the passages of Scripture already cited, the seven "I am" statements must be regarded as a weak proof. By relying almost exclusively on these largely metaphorical statements and completely ignoring the dozens of magnificent verses and passages throughout the Bible which prove that the Messiah was God incarnate and that Jesus claimed to be the Messiah the Son of God, the tract does a great disservice to the Christian faith. It leaves the uninformed reader with the distinct impression (a) that the proof supplied in the tract is the best one and (b) that the Bible contains nothing else of substance to show that Jesus identified himself as God.

This has several serious implications:

1. It trivializes the Word of God.
2. It replaces self-evident theological propositions with metaphors.
3. It fails to demonstrate that Jesus alone is the Son of God.
4. It greatly blurs the distinction between the claim made by Jesus and the claims made by the mystics – who also identify themselves as God.
5. It treats as inconclusive and subjective a matter which the Bible addresses clearly and decisively.



CONCLUSION

In attempting to answer the question, '**Did Jesus Identify Himself as God?**', the Lighthouse Trails tract ignored passages from the Old Testament which gave a straightforward 'Yes!' many times over. The Old Testament showed in at least 14 places that the Messiah and YHWH were one. So, by claiming to be the Messiah, Jesus was positively identifying himself as God.

Then the tract ignored the three occasions when the Father spoke from heaven and declared that Jesus was His Son. Since Jesus did not deny these dramatic proclamations of his deity, they are further conclusive evidence that Jesus identified himself as God.

The tract then failed to mention any of the 18 passages from the four Gospel accounts (cited above) in which Jesus positively acknowledged or affirmed his deity.

In addition to the inexplicable omission of these 35 passages – any one of which would have answered the question! – the tract also ignored important passages relating to the authority that Jesus claimed to have to forgive sin. This claim was clear evidence that Jesus identified himself with God. The tract also ignored the highly significant moment when Jesus announced the introduction – through his own blood – of the New Covenant promised by the LORD in chapter 31 of Jeremiah, which is something that only God Himself could accomplish. The editors also omitted all reference to the many occasions when Jesus allowed himself to be worshipped. Since God alone can receive worship, Jesus was publicly identifying himself as God every time he accepted worship.

In addition to these glaring omissions, the tract made no mention of lengthy passages of Scripture – notably the remarkable discourse recorded in chapter 5 of the Gospel of John – which makes absolutely no sense unless Jesus had identified himself as God. It also downplayed the importance of the Gospel of John as a whole in demonstrating the Lord's divinity and showing that Jesus explicitly and repeatedly identified himself as God.

Personally I find it astonishing that a well-known Christian discernment ministry should release a tract like this. It ought to be evident to pastors and preachers everywhere, and to all who love God's Word, that the tract is unfit for purpose and should be withdrawn.

As a subject of edification, the deity of the Messiah, including the claim by Jesus that he was the Son of God, should be treated in the most Scriptural manner possible. Every effort should be made to ensure that this wonderful truth – the very basis of our salvation – is proclaimed joyfully and faithfully by Christians everywhere.

I would strongly urge Lighthouse Trails to withdraw this tract and issue a greatly revised version, one that does justice to the abundant evidence in Scripture that Jesus identified himself as God.

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